

Town of Rowe
Board of Selectmen – Minutes
Wednesday, October 17, 2018 – 6:30 pm
Rowe Town Hall - Hearing Room 1

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Chair Morse at 6:30 p.m.

Present: Chair Jennifer Morse, Vice-Chair Dennis May, Member Sokol and Executive Secretary Janice Boudreau
Cindy Laffond, Ellen Miller, Loretta Dionne, Maggie Rice, Joanne Semanie

OPEN MEETING

Announcement of recording devices & noteworthy information (one recording device)

APPOINTMENTS

6:30 P.M. EMD - Discuss Table Top Exercise November 3 – Annex Plan, EDS Drill on October 24, Space in Town Hall for EOC (Emergency Operations Center)- Tabled until a later date

6:30 P.M. BOARD OF HEALTH CHAIR - Update on Gracy House Mold/Septic – Gracy House Committee appointment: On Friday, October 12th, Mike Feeney Director of the Indoor Air Quality Program for the Bureau of Environmental Health with the MA Dept. of Public Health conducted an indoor air quality of the Gracy House. Executive Secretary spoke with Mr. Feeney to discuss preliminary findings and he indicated that there was mold found in the building and recommended closing until remediation. A list of problems were read and reviewed from a telephone discussion with Mr. Feeney. Following discussion, it was agreed to close the Gracy House since exposure to mold can cause serious problems with immune compromised issues. An email from Town Nurse also agreed with the opinion to close the facility until remediation can occur. It was agreed to close the facility and wait to receive the report from Mr. Feeney with his findings and recommendations.

Board of Health Chair Maggie Rice expressed concerns over the Gracy House septic system and that it would unlikely pass a Title V test. It was agreed to consider a Title V inspection be added to the Board of Health budget in FY2020.

MINUTES

1. Minutes of October 3, 2018- Tabled review until a later date.

OLD BUSINESS

1. MLP Update: Executive Secretary reported working on the broadband hut and obtaining an electrician and necessary building permits. Ms. Boudreau completed the Quarterly Report and Certification of Compliance paperwork resulting in the receipt of the 3rd installment of the Executive Office of Housing & Economic Development Grant for \$77,000.00 on October 16, 2018.

2. Policy Regarding Work on Private Property: A draft letter to citizens reminding them of that Town employees are not allowed to work on private projects with examples cited. It was agreed to publish the letter in the Rowe Goal Post since there seemed to be many requests for work from citizens it included examples of work requested.
3. Review Additions to Personnel Policy Manual: Select Board Members reviewed updates to the Personnel Policy Manual in Section 19: Travel & Expense Reports/Reimbursement (Use of Vehicles):

“Municipal vehicles will not be used to transport passengers who are not directly or indirectly related to municipal business. Passengers shall be limited to Town employees and individuals who are directly associated with Town work activity (committee members, consultants, contractors etc.) Family members shall not be transported in Town vehicles.”

and Section 34: Insurance:

“Regular employees may participate in the Town’s medical insurance plan. The town currently pays eighty-five percent (85%) of the medical insurance premium. New employees that qualify for employee benefit, including health insurance benefits, must sign on within 30 days of hire; otherwise, apply at the next open enrollment period. Employees qualified for health insurance benefits through the Town of Rowe reaching Medicare eligible age, must sign on to Medicare within one month prior to reaching 65 or lose insurance benefits from the Town. When an active employee is age 65 and eligible for Medicare but still working and eligible for group coverage through the Town of Rowe, the group health coverage becomes primary. The employee should notify the Social Security Administration that they have group coverage and want to defer Medicare Part B coverage until retirement. A copy of the Medicare Card showing Part A should be sent to the Administrative Clerk. DEFRA (Deficit Reduction Act of 1984), also applies to non-working spouses of active employees who are 65, eligible for Medicare and covered under the health coverage of an active employee spouse who may or may not be age 65. The spouse should notify Social Security of the group coverage through their working spouse and defer Medicare Part B.”

It was agreed to annotate the new additions and send a copy of the revised Personnel Policy Manual to Town Employees.

4. Odyssey Advisors Proposal for Signing: Select Board Members voted to enter into agreement with Odyssey Advisors for Governmental Accounting Standards Board Statement No. 75 Accounting and Financial Reporting by Employers for Postemployment Benefits Other Than Pensions at last meeting on October 3, 2018. Since they did not require a contract, the Board signed the Quotation for Post Retirement Analysis.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Auxiliary Officer Request: Chief Shippee requested that, Kyle Shippee, having resigned from his position as Part-Time Reserve Officer since accepting a full-time position as Heavy Equipment Driver, be appointed as an Auxiliary Officer. Town Counsel advised we not appoint Mr. Shippee as an Auxiliary Officer to your Department for a number of reasons:

Donna MacNichol, Esq. wrote:

“He is an immediate family member and it is a conflict of interest to supervise. As such, the Select Board would have to supervise and sign off on any assignment he is given. If the Chief assigns him, even for Old Home Days, then she would be making a decision that has a direct financial effect on a member of her immediate family.

In addition, as you have pointed out, Mr. Shippee would be an employee of the Town of Rowe in each position. That means that anytime he works over 40 hours regardless of whether in one or both positions, he will get overtime. It does not appear that this will be much money, but given an emergency, with all hands on deck, he would need to work for the highway department and then if needed the police department as well. This could add up, particularly in a year with a great deal of snow and ice.”

Since there are an adequate number of Auxiliary Officers at the present time, members agreed with Town Counsel and will not appoint Mr. Shippee for this position.

Following discussion about the Auxiliary Officer, there was discussion about some other issues:

Administrative Duties: It was noted that monthly reports were months late and Job Description acknowledgements were not handed in a timely manner and that they be sent directly to Executive Secretary.

Police Duty: There was discussion about whether Chief Shippee had handed in timesheets for her regular police time and from National Grid for detail work. There are questions about allocation of time between detail and Police Chief responsibilities.

Communication Skills: There was discussion about Several Town Employees and Departments have reported that Police Chief spoke to them expressing opinions and the tone of the discussions are often in anger. It is of concern that, as a Police Chief, the temperament to be more respectful and, when in the role of a town employee, to demonstrate and perform in a cooperative manner with others. There were a few incidents discussed in which there was an inability to report facts with detail, accuracy and clarity which of concern.

Social Media: The Facebook page was discussed and it was agreed that there needs to be a further discussion with the Chief concerning appropriate content and engagement with the community.

Following discussion it was agreed to meet with Police Chief Shippee to discuss the issues further.

2. Mass Cultural Council Authorization Contract: Select Board Members reviewed the Standard Contract Form with the MA Cultural Council to transfer FY19 funds to our local council.

Motion to Sign MA Cultural Council Contract: Member Sokol made a motion to sign the Standard Contract Form with the MA Cultural Council to transfer FY19 funds to our local council. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair May was unanimously accepted.
(3/0/0)

3. COLA Recommendations for 2020 Budgeting – Vote: Chair Morse asked members to consider the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) recommendation for FY20 so boards and committees could prepare their FY20 budgets with the updated figure. Since the Social Security Administration recommendation for FY20 is 2.8% asked to consider setting the FY20 COLA at 2.5%.

Motion to Set FY2020 COLA Rate: Following discussion, Chair Morse made a motion to set the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) recommendation for FY2020 at 2.5%. The motion, seconded by Vice-Chair May, was unanimously accepted. (3/0/0)

4. Structure over Mailboxes - Picture of Possible Design and Obtaining Estimate: Chair Morse provided a photograph of an example of a mailbox cover she had seen that might work for the outside mailboxes at Town Hall. Chair Morse said she would contact a contractor to obtain an estimate.
5. Insurance Discussion Regarding Chapter 32B Section 9D: Chair Morse said she had asked Town Counsel to attend a Select Board meeting on November 14th to discuss the insurance benefits to town employees and review all the MA General Law sections pertaining to the issue. In the interim, she asked that questions be prepared for the meeting.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY UPDATES

1. Question About Disposing of Refrigerator: Executive Secretary asked if she could put the refrigerator that was in the Select Board office to bid as excess property since it was no longer used and no department was in need of it.
2. Floppy Disk Progress: Northeast IT (NEIT) completed a part of the request to get information from some old floppy disks stored in the town safe to locate old Select Board Meeting Minutes that were not kept in hard copy form to find votes pertaining to employee health insurance benefits. Chair Morse and Ms. Boudreau reviewed the Minutes that were retrieved from the disks and no insurance votes were located.

MAIL & CORRESPONDENCE

Mail was reviewed and no action was required.

Warrants: FY19 W09 Payroll FY19 W08

Vice-Chair May invoked the Rule of Necessity since he had a family member on the payroll.

Adjournment: Seeing no further business, Vice-Chair May made a motion to adjourn the Meeting at p.m. The motion, seconded by Member Sokol, was unanimously accepted. (3/0/0)

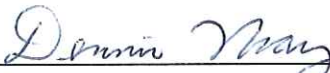
Janice Boudreau
Executive Secretary

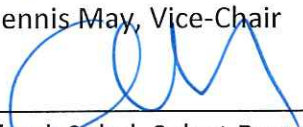
Approval Date:

October 30, 2018

Approved:


Jennifer Morse, Chair


Dennis May, Vice-Chair


Chuck Sokol, Select Board Member

Documents:

- Agenda 10-17-18
- Draft Minutes 10-03-2018
- Personnel Policy Manual Rev. 10-17-18
- Odyssey Advisors Proposal
- Mass Cultural Council Authorization Contract
- Letters to DPW Applicants
- K. Shippee Hire Letter
- National Grid Invoice Traffic Protection Assistance
- Gracy House Maintenance Issues
- Town Counsel email re: Hiring
- Sam.gov Designation of Administrator Letter
- Rowe Town Nurse email re: mold issue 10-17-18
- Emergency Declaration
- Deerfield River Flooding Comprehensive Emergency Mgt. Plan Annex
- Police Log July & August 2018
- Monthly Report Sept. 2018 Fire Dept.
- Public Purpose Letter DRAFT

Mail

- MA Office on Disability
- MMA Legislative Breakfast Meetings
- Hampshire County Select Boards Assn Meeting
- FRCOG Emergency Prep Meeting
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